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ABSTRACT

The dissemination phase (Phase II) of the Rural Shared Services Project is reported in this document. Efforts of the dissemination phase were concentrated in 5 target states: Vermont, Georgia, Wyoming, Montana, and New Mexico; national dissemination was limited to attendance at national conferences, the U. S. Office of Education PREP materials for state departments of education, and articles in national and regional magazines. Four stages of work included (1) contacting Federal leaders to communicate Phase I findings; (2) visiting leaders in rural education, particularly in target states, to determine commitment to the project; (3) planning and conducting presentations on data obtained from Phase I; and (4) assessing strategies and writing up case-study summaries. In the document, anticipated outcomes of Phase II are listed, and case studies are given for each target state. Related documents are ED 028 882 through ED 028 885. (AN)

ED042546

SUMMARY REPORT:
NATIONAL DISSEMINATION AND THE FIVE TARGET STATES

Part Three
Final Report for Phase II--Dissemination

RURAL SHARED SERVICES

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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FOREWORD

Shared service is an umbrella term used in this report to describe an activity in which an educational function is provided for students through the combined efforts of two or more local schools or school districts. The concept of shared services is not new; however, the practice is being used extensively today to provide quality education and equality of educational opportunity to students who, by circumstance of residence, are required to attend schools with limited enrollments, limited facilities, often poorly trained teachers, and more often limited course offerings. Although any two or more schools--urban, suburban, or rural--may share a service, the focus of this report is on shared services in the rural setting.

During the past two years a nationwide study of shared service projects has been conducted by Dr. Ray Jongeward of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory at Portland, Oregon, with the cooperation of Dr. Frank Heesacker, Northern Montana College at Havre. Supported by the U. S. Office of Education, the study was designed "to identify research results and developmental efforts by regional cooperatives, and to evaluate, synthesize, document, and translate this information into utilitarian statements." The results of Phase I are presented in four reports, which are available through the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC):

Project Report ED 028 885, 133p., MF - 75¢, HC - $6.75
This report defines rural shared services, describes how they are organized and operated, and assesses their effects.

Annotated Bibliography ED 028 884, 32 p., MF - 25¢, HC - $1.70
This report reviews 68 publications describing rural shared service concepts. These publications were selected from more than 200 by leaders in rural education who participated in the project.

Location of Shared Services ED 028 883, MF - 50¢, HC - $6.20
This report provides information on 215 shared services in 48 states.

Dissemination Strategies and Devices ED 028 882, 22 p., MF - 25¢, HC - $1.20
This report examines potential methods of disseminating usable information on shared services to school administrators and community leaders.

The majority of dissemination efforts of Rural Shared Service Information (Phase II) was concentrated in five target states: Vermont, Georgia, Wyoming, Montana and New Mexico. National dissemination was limited to attendance at national conferences, the U. S. Office of Education PREP materials for State Departments of Education and articles in national and regional magazines.

Products resulting from Phase II of Rural Shared Services are:

- A four-page brochure and a one-page information sheet explaining the concept of shared services.
- A simulation exercise, or game, which helps participants understand how sharing of services works.
- A 45-minute tape-slide presentation showing highlights of the Rural Shared Services Project in both Phases I and II.
- Five case studies which outline procedures, strategies and materials used in each of the five target states--Montana, Vermont, New Mexico, Wyoming and Georgia.
- A tabloid newspaper which embodies the project report on dissemination of rural shared services.

Products developed with target states include:

Georgia
- A Design for an English Curriculum, Georgia Department of Education, 1968.
- Ten Information Sheets illustrating shared services.

Montana
- Tape recording of three-minute radio spots.
- Ten Information Sheets illustrating shared services.
- Summary of North Central Montana School Board Conference held November 24, 1969 in Havre, Montana.
- Summary of Intermediate Media Centers Workshop held February 24-25, 1970 in Great Falls, Montana.
- Proposal for a Shared Educational Services Program for a fifteen school general consultant service.
- Proposal for a Title III Project for a five-district area to provide consultants in the area of curriculum development by investigating instructional systems and individualization of instructional programs with techniques or processes necessary for implementation.

New Mexico
- A Proposed Rural Colligation, December 1969.
- Ten Information Sheets illustrating shared services.

Vermont
- A 35 mm slide presentation including a typescript on the values of kindergarten:
  Part I - The Curriculum for the Kindergarten
  Part II - What Children Learn During Kindergarten
  Part III - Materials, Equipment, and Room Arrangement for Kindergarten
- Ten Information Sheets illustrating shared services.
- Brochure, Design for Kindergarten - Waterford/Concord

Wyoming
- Ten Information Sheets illustrating shared services.
- Public and Radio Presentations featuring the Big Horn Basin Children's Center.
- 8 mm film, 35 mm slides, transparencies and accompanying narration featuring the Big Horn Basin Children's Center.

NATIONAL DISSEMINATION

Overview

The dissemination phase (Phase II) of the Rural Shared Services Project was funded as an amendment to the Office of Education Contract No. OEC-0-8-080583-4532 (010).

Initiated during April 1969, Phase II included four stages of work:

1. Federal leaders interested in rural education were contacted to communicate Phase I findings, refine dissemination plans and strategies, identify the national target of the project, collect necessary background data and engage in personal skills training.

2. Target state(s) and rural education leaders were visited to determine interest and commitment toward the project, identify dissemination mechanisms and media appropriate within each target state and determine the most effective means for reaching these target audiences. Colleges/Universities also were included at this level to determine their interest and willingness to cooperate and to be involved.

3. Materials were custom made from Phase I data into plans and strategies as determined by target state leaders and specialists. Consultant help was provided to state level personnel at agencies and institutions which agreed to cooperate in the dissemination process. Workshops, seminars, presentations and displays also were planned and conducted.

4. Strategies and procedures were assessed. Important events taking place during the project were carefully documented. Case study summaries were written as a concluding evaluation procedure.

Anticipated outcomes of Phase II included:

1. A unique multilevel involvement in a dissemination process

   This was realized by (a) asking federal office personnel to recommend target states for the project; (b) asking state level personnel which regions within their state would be most receptive to the concept of shared services; and (c) asking local personnel within the target region to describe their needs and interests.

   Nationwide dissemination as illustrated in this report had the covert potential of involving persons from every walk of life.

2. A model for leadership identification and involvement

   The model can best be described as "the nominations approach" to leadership identification. Persons at the national level assisted in identifying states exhibiting leadership in rural education. Personnel at the state level were invaluable in identifying leaders within their respective states.

3. A case study of dissemination processes and effects

   The national case study as well as the case studies on each of the five states fulfills this expectancy.

4-5. A design by local leaders for custom built dissemination media and materials and a number of "tailor made" dissemination products prepared by disseminators and professionals

   These two responsibilities were fulfilled as demand dictated.

In Vermont, statewide dissemination was not necessary. Publicity materials and project dissemination materials for the target region were prepared and are included with the Vermont Case Study.

In Georgia, the need was for minimal incentive funds to publish the "vehicle" for implementing dissemination strategies.

In New Mexico, the project has yet to be completed but, if realized, will call for publicity to be designed locally. New Mexico State Department personnel are committed to seeing this through, should the telephone colligation become a reality.

In Wyoming, extensive materials were developed at the local level to publicize and disseminate information about the proposed project.

In Montana, dissemination took a variety of forms, including presentations at statewide meetings, use of prepackaged Social Studies Units, local involvement workshops, radio spot announcements and extensive newspaper publicity.

Nationally, presentations were made at a conference on "Solving Rural Education Problems" in Denver, and before a "National Conference on Regional Education Programs" in Cincinnati. Materials were prepared for dissemination in the USOE package known as PREP (Putting Research into Educational Practice). Copies of Phase I reports were provided until the supply was exhausted and were made available through ERIC/CRESS. Articles were written for publication in the ERIC/CRESS Newsletter, Montana Business Quarterly, Today's Education and American Education. Backup materials for the project were utilized by the Small Schools Program of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory and a proposal for a one-week workshop on the theme of shared services has been submitted to the American Association of School Administrators.

GEORGIA

Overview

Based on information collected during Phase 1 and recommendations of U. S. Office of Education personnel, Georgia was selected as the southeast target state for the dissemination phase of the Rural Shared Services Project. The desire to work with Georgia was communicated by letter August 7, 1969, to Superintendent of Public Instruction, Jack Nix. Mr. Nix designated Mr. Mize, Director of Education, as liaison for the dissemination phase.

A meeting was arranged with Mr. Mize and the State's eight Shared Services Directors at Griffin, Georgia, on Friday, October 21. Prior to the meeting, John Codwell, Associate Director of the Education Improvement Project for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools was informed and asked for advice regarding possible projects. At the Griffin meeting, decisions were made:

1. To develop a model or plan of procedure for consultants and/or principals to implement new educational plans effectively into the classroom
2. Field test the model in several schools
3. Utilize Georgia's new reading and language development program in field testing the model.

Following these meetings, an outline of the project was sent to each participant, the Southeastern Education Laboratory and John Codwell.

A second meeting was scheduled December 4 for further investigation of concepts of the model. A planning meeting was held the prior day to

devise strategies for the program. Directors and language arts supervisors from each of the eight Shared Services Districts, State Department personnel and two representatives from the Southeastern Laboratory participated. As a result, committees were assigned to work on four problems: evaluation, inservice, personnel and the model. January 5 was set as the deadline for recommending solutions to the problems, and February 5 was designated for another meeting to develop specific details of the model for effectively implementing and diffusing new education programs.

A summary of the meeting was prepared and sent to selected participants and John Codwell.

A total of $400 was provided to print extra copies of the new English program curriculum guide in preparation for implementing the model.

Because of the involvement of a number of agencies and enthusiastic participation of Georgia educators, it was unnecessary for the project disseminator to attend the meeting February 5 and 6. A letter from Dr. Flanders at the Griffin Shared Services Center indicated representatives from the Southeastern Laboratory, the State Department of Education, Shared Services Districts, and colleges were assigned to committees to complete the model for implementing the new curriculum. Copies of the curriculum guide being implemented are included in the report.

MONTANA

Overview

In Montana the most significant direct results of the Rural Shared Services project were:

1. The enactment of House Bill 448, which permits districts to share funding on an interlocal basis
2. Passage of a House-Senate joint resolution which directs the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to report "findings of an investigation of implications for Montana of shared services to the next legislative assembly in 1971"

Montana was invited to participate in the dissemination phase in a letter to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction on August 7, 1969. As a result of the initial meeting between State Superintendent Dolores Colburg and Frank Heesacker, George Bandy and Lee Spuhler, Dr. Heesacker was scheduled to speak at the New Administrators Conference. On the same visit to Helena, contact was made with Mr. James Kenny, Executive Secretary of the Montana School Boards Association, who scheduled both Dr. Heesacker and Dr. Bandy on the association's convention program. Dr. Bandy presented a speech to the full assembly.

These presentations resulted in a series of meetings:

1. The Ravalli County Interdistrict Planning group
2. At a Fort Benton meeting, Dr. Bandy presented the results from the planning group meeting, and reported on the impact of the project
3. A meeting on the Northern Montana College campus focused on sharing services

4. A meeting was held in Broadview to develop strategies for better staff utilization

5. The provision of curriculum development consultants was discussed on a shared basis by five districts at a Nashua meeting although a prospectus for a federally funded program was not accepted at the State Department level, the districts have proceeded on a limited basis with local funding

The sharing of MATCH BOXES from the Boston Museum by 24 one- and two-room schools in Pondera, Toole and Teton Counties is one of the first concrete illustrations of intercounty cooperation in Montana. These county superintendents are now investigating additional programs they might share.

Dr. Heesacker's address at the Nineteenth Annual Conference of the Montana Department of Elementary School Principals resulted in a supporting editorial in the Great Falls Tribune.

A concern was expressed by Cascade County Superintendent for continuation in "some manner" of a conservation education project. Conferring with the superintendent encouraged her to approach the Great Falls School District to provide local funding. In cooperation with nine other districts, this project will continue in the Cascade County area schools.

Dr. Heesacker served as advisor in developing the Instructional Material Center Workshop sponsored by State Superintendent of Public Instruction on February 24-25 in Great Falls. A statewide system of instructional media centers is envisioned to serve all the State's youth.

Evidence that the impact of the Shared Services Project has not yet been fully realized is illustrated by two recent newspaper articles. At the Montana State School Administrators Annual Conference,

State Superintendent Dolores Colburg noted, "In school district organization it is necessary to explore the area of cooperative programs, shared services and formation of intermediate units." Additional "spin off" is illustrated in the case study.

Voters in each of nine districts have approved a coordinator of cooperative activities who will serve Northern Montana Colleges as a staff member one-half day and serve the nine districts one-half day.
An additional outgrowth is the Northern Montana College/Havre District No. 16 "Highland Park Project."

Radio spot announcements were prepared for distribution to all radio stations in Montana. These were written and recorded by Stan Stevens, a State Senator and President of the Montana Broadcasters Association.

It is believed that interest developed among staff members at Northern Montana College will lead to development of an educational specialty to be identified as "Specialist in Rural Education." Should the proposed rural colligation (see New Mexico report) materialize, Northern Montana College anticipates playing a major role. Additionally, Northern Montana College has requested membership in the National Federation for the Improvement of Rural Education (NFIRE).

NEW MEXICO

Overview

A letter was forwarded from the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory to Superintendent of Public Instruction Leonard Delayo, on August 7, 1969 inviting the State of New Mexico to participate in dissemination. Following a response September 9 from Mr. Gene Whitlock, a meeting was scheduled for October 20 with state level personnel and October 21 with thirty rural administrators. A meeting of selected state "decision makers" was called by Mr. Delayo. Thirty rural administrators were invited to a meeting in Santa Fe.

Dr. Jongeward, Dr. Heesacker and Mrs. Thorne were oriented to New Mexico problems. Meetings were conducted and activities described. A summary evaluation of the superintendents' meetings was made. The financial management of education in New Mexico appeared to rest with one person who was negative toward the concept of shared services. Since the commitment had been made to involve New Mexico as one of the target states, an alternate avenue of providing shared activity took the form of proposing a desperately needed communication channel for the administrators of rural schools.

At this point the proposed telephone colligation has not been realized. The most recent information (April 1970 telephone call to ERIC/CRESS) indicates Sandia Corporation is vitally interested in the proposed colligation, but has not yet had time to act upon it.

VERMONT

Overview

The project disseminator attended a two-week workshop in Plymouth, New Hampshire, during July 1969. The proximity to Montpelier made possible a personal visit with Vermont State Department of Education personnel July 22-23 to outline the proposed participation of Vermont as one of the five target states. The success of this initial visit is evidenced by the letter from Dr. Leon Bruno.

A subsequent meeting in Vermont was scheduled September 8-9 to outline the focus of shared services to other State Department personnel. A target region was identified and shared possibilities within that region were explored. One outgrowth of the September 8 meeting was involvement of a college. Previous commitments of personnel from the target region and weather prevented a presentation to the Committee on Small High Schools.

A meeting held in the Concord area November 17-18 resulted in a decision to propose establishment of kindergartens to four school districts in the Essex/Caldonia Supervisory Union. A brief overview of the educational status of the eight districts in the Supervisory Union was prepared. A presentation also was made to secondary teachers in the Concord High School, and potential involvement of Lyndon State College was discussed with President Robert Long. Mrs. Doris Wells, Director of Student Teaching at the college and a specialist in early childhood education, was retained as a local consultant to the project. This is resulting in a high level of commitment within the region for continuation of the shared activity.

A final visit was made to the target region February 17-18 by Heesacker and Wells to make presentations to the school boards of Concord and Waterford districts. Local mail-outs were designed and distributed to all voters in the two districts. News releases were prepared as illustrated by a letter from Superintendent Mathewson. The project resulted in Concord Town and Waterford voters approving establishment of kindergartens effective in September 1970 and financed with local funds.

A second major concern of school board members throughout the eight districts was for improved communication. A mimeographed circular prepared by students for all the schools in the Union was suggested at a meeting with the staff at Concord High School. As a result, publication of the Compass was begun.

An additional activity in Vermont was assistance to the Design Committees of the Essex/Caldonia Supervisory Union in implementing Vermont's outstanding concept of "philosophy to practice."

Two extensive news releases were prepared in February by the State Department of Education, resulting in statewide dissemination of the shared services concept. Another impact of the project in Vermont is sharing by the State Department itself.

Correspondence from a member of the Vermont State Legislature is evidence of impact yet to be realized. It is further anticipated that two additional districts will provide kindergarten next year and the difficulties encountered as well as procedures utilized in this initial phase will be recognized.

WYOMING

Overview

A letter was forwarded to State Superintendent of Public Instruction Harry Roberts, on August 7, 1969, indicating the desire to work in the State of Wyoming. A followup call was made to Mr. Roberts September 4 and a visit was scheduled with state level personnel for September 30. Reactions at the meeting were noted and the information obtained was prepared in a summary.

A second visit was scheduled October 15-16 by both Dr. Jongeward and Dr. Heesacker. Reactions and observations were noted. The result was a decision to work with Dr. James and Dr. Lucas in promoting the Big Horn Basin Children's Center. Operational funds for the Center were being provided by the Gottsche Foundation. A needed new facility was envisioned by Dr. James as a cooperative effort with school districts in a five-county area under the Education Services Act.

The project disseminator was invited to meet with representatives from each of the five counties to explore alternatives for providing funds for a new facility and operations. The initial meeting seemed successful. The extent of the problem was identified.

A subsequent meeting was held at Cody, Wyoming, where the Big Horn Basin Children's Center Advisory Board developed a specific plan for disseminating information and conducting a series of local district meetings. A typescript from the November 14 meeting, which was tape recorded, reveals the nature of the two meetings involving the project disseminator.

Following the December 1 meeting, the director of the Title III planning project was deemed capable of carrying on. Materials developed and presented throughout the region are evidence of this ability.

A survey of current needs in operation of the center was conducted in the five counties. Criteria for admission, by-laws and a constitution have been developed, and costs have been projected and preliminary plans developed. Personnel involved in the project locally are optimistic that the voters will approve the establishment of the Big Horn Basin Children's Center with funding from self-imposed taxation in the five counties. The catalytic action of an external resource person is believed highly beneficial in making this proposed center a reality. The provision of minimal funds for the preparation of local publicity material would appear to have been the difference between a successful venture and a disappointment.